Covering EMU and Ypsilanti area arts and entertainment news

Roots

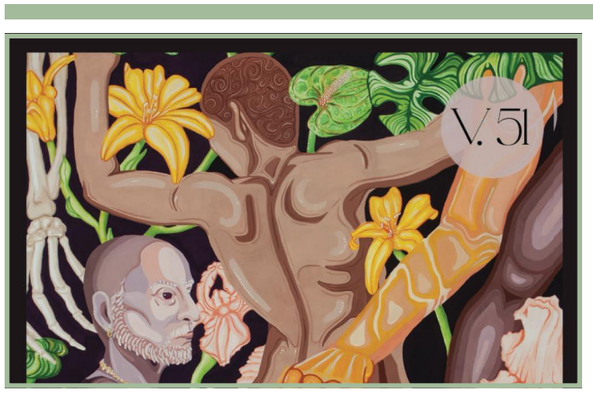
Congrats to Cellar Roots Editor-in-Chief, Madison Cantrell, on their graduation!

Tuesday, December 9, 2025 Volume 1, Issue 4

Local Artist of the Month: Creator of Detroit Undercover, Chey Ely

Detroit Undercover Magazine was created to highlight local artist in Detroit. Copies of the first edition can be purchased at both the Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti location of Vertex Coffee. *Photo Courtesy of Chey Ely*

Continued on page 6



Cellar Roots — Page 3

Calender — Pages 5 and 6

Local Vinyl — Page 7

Roots

Roots is the monthly arts and entertainment magazine of *The Eastern Echo* and *Cellar Roots*, highlighting the vibrant creative communities present at Eastern Michigan University and in Ypsilanti. Contents are subject to copyright and may not be reproduced without prior written consent of *The Eastern Echo*.

COPYRIGHT @ 2025 (*The Eastern Echo*)
All rights reserved.

Corrections

Roots corrects mistakes. If we got it wrong, we want to make it right. Errors should be brought to the attention of the editor-in-chief by email at cellarroots@easternecho.com.

Roots Staff

Fall 2025

Cellar Roots Editor-in-Chief, Arts Editor:
Madison Cantrell
cellarroots@easternecho.com

Arts and Entertainment Reporters:
Carol Detary
Hannah Borders

Student Media Advisor:
Christine Uthoff
advisor@easternecho.com

Join the Roots team!

Email resume & portfolio to cellarroots@easternecho.com

The Eastern Echo Photo of the Month

The survivors of the wedding pose for a photo together in EMU Theatre's production of Big Love. From left: Gary Zelley (Giuliano), Gavin Miller (Bella), Wyatt Hicks (Nikos), Morgan Stillson (Lydia), Piero (Jack Fowler), Autumn Rust (Olympia), and Frankie Cramer (Thyona). *Max Taylor/The Eastern Echo*

Local Calls For Art

The Great Lakes Drawing Biennial
EMU University Gallery
Dec. 12
emugalleries.org

—

Creative Prescriptions
Medicine Cabinet Gallery
Jan. 10, 2026
dzanchouse.org

—

Crossing Lines Design Expo
EMU Undergraduate Symposium
Jan. 15, 2026
emich.edu/symposium

—

Volume 52 Submissions
Cellar Roots
Jan. 20, 2026
linktr.ee/CellarRoots

Written and Visual Art Anthology
YpsiWrites
Feb. 1, 2026
ypsiwrites.com

—

2027 Outdoor Exhibition
Embracing Our Differences
July 1, 2026
embracingourdifferences.org

—

2026 Exhibitions
22 North Gallery
TBD
22north.org

—

Scrap Club Vendors
Bridge Community Cafe
TBD
bridgecommunity.cafe

Cellar Roots Volume 51 Spotlight

Ameera Salman (left) and Madison Cantrell (right) pose during Cellar Roots annual gallery show recepiton in EMU Intermedia Gallery Groups's Student Center Gallery on April 3, 2025. *Photo Courtesy of Madison Cantrell*

Staff:

Editor-in-Chief:
Madison Cantrell

Student Media Advisor:
Christine Uthoff

Chief Editorial Advisor:
Ameera Salman

Graphic Design Lead:
Laurence Bourdeau

Graphic Designer:
Ashley Schemer

Cover Art:
Clara Engel
"Mother Nature"

This Year's Jurors:

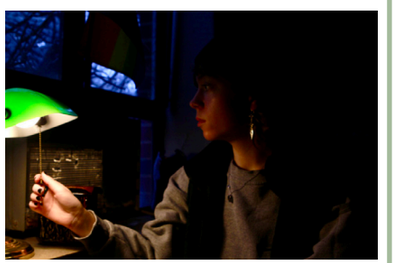
2D Media:
Nia Crutcher
Brian Spolans
Lisse Williams

3D Media:
Margeaux Claude
John DeHoog
Kristen Holsworth

Photo/Digital:
Madison Cantrell
Takeisha Jefferson
Chris Reilly

Poetry/Prose:
Aryana Jharia
Molly Raynor
Ameera Salman

Cellar Roots Volume 51 Page 2 crediting the 2024-25 Cellar Roots staff and jury members. *Digital File Courtesy of Cellar Roots*



Madison Cantrell
Office Self Portrait
Digital photo shot on Canon 7D

Letter from the Editor:

Cellar Roots is like a plant — give it water and sunlight and it might just grow. Since Cellar Roots' first volume in 1971, this plant has continued to grow each year, but not without struggle. In recent years, we as a magazine have struggled to sustain our operations and keep staff involved, but still, we grow and this is thanks to everyone involved in Cellar Roots' past, present, and future and the roots we have created and strengthened over time. Volume 51 will be my first and last Cellar Roots publication as Editor-in-Chief, as I plan to graduate this fall, and having the opportunity to highlight the work of many talented EMU artists has been an honor. A special thank you to the Cellar Roots team, the amazing EMU artists who submitted this year, the Cellar Roots jury, and the EMU Student Media Department, without you, Cellar Roots Volume 51 would not have been possible. As an artist myself, I understand how scary it can be to submit your work, but now more than ever as art and artists have the ability to impact our minds, bodies, and souls, I urge you to keep creating and submitting as art is power, art is activism. And though I'm unsure of what the future holds for Cellar Roots, and myself, this year we did it all. Thank you.

Madison Cantrell

Cellar Roots Volume 51 Page 3 featuring self-portrait and letter from the 2024-25 Cellar Roots Editor-in-Chief, Madison Cantrell. *Digital File Courtesy of Cellar Roots*

Laurence Bourdeau (left) and Madison Cantrell (right) represent and sell Cellar Roots Volume 51 and mystery editions at the 2025 Student Media Gala in the Ypsilanti Freighthouse. *Max Taylor/The Eastern Echo*

Check out Cellar Roots Volume 51 on Amazon!

Calendar

Art Exhibitions

Anything But ... New Materials
Group exhibit features works created of recycled, reused or repurposed materials.
The North Gallery at Riverside Arts Center
Until Jan. 9, 2026
Gallery hours: 4-6 p.m. Friday; and 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday
76 N. Huron St.

Anything But New Materials
Group Exhibition
RIVERSIDE ARTS CENTER
12/5/2025 – 1/9/26 | North Gallery at Riverside Arts Center | Opening Reception: 12/5/25 5 - 7pm | Visit riversidearts.org/gallery for open hours | Poster artwork by Jaclyn Gordyan.

The Riverside Arts Center poster promotes a group exhibit of works using recycled materials. Courtesy of Riverside Arts Center

Live Music

Ypsilanti Symphony Orchestra Holiday Concert & Auction
The "Nutcracker Suite and Swing" with guests Depot Town Big Band.
1:30 p.m. auction; 3 p.m. concert
Sunday, Dec. 14
Tickets: $7.96 (seniors) to $33.65; general admission is $15.45.
More information: YpsilantiSymphony.org
Lincoln High School Performing Arts Center

A Boychoir Christmas
The Boychoir of Ann Arbor, led by John Boonenberg, presents the 39th annual "A Boychoir Christmas" featuring traditional and contemporary hymns and carols.
6 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 14
First Presbyterian Church
300 N. Washington St.

—

Fundraiser and Toy Drive for Ozone House
Featuring Santa's Secret Stash with James Bourland & the 'Staches. Includes a Christmas Dance show from Rhizome Roots Studio and live music. Entry fees support Ozone House.
6-10 p.m. Friday, Dec. 19
Water Tower Distilling
23 N. Washington St.

—

Beyond Christmas
The Beyond Choir steps into the season with the Beyond Christmas concert, featuring traditional holiday carols and contemporary arrangements.
Admission: $20
7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 20
Pease Auditorium

Genealogy Class

Washtenaw County African American Genealogical Society
Learn new tools to navigate the complex resources of African American ancestry during the society's meetings, held every third Saturday. All skill levels are welcome.
10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 17, 2026
Online event; access link through the Ypsilanti District Library event page

Holiday Lights

Wild Lights at the Detroit Zoo
Wander through millions of lights, visit an enchanted rain forest and sip cocoa to support global conservation during this holiday season event.
5-10:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturday; 5-9 p.m. weekdays and Sunday
Dec. 11-23 and 26-31; Jan. 2-4
Admission: $17-$75
Detroit Zoo
8450 W. 10 Mile Road
Royal Oak

—

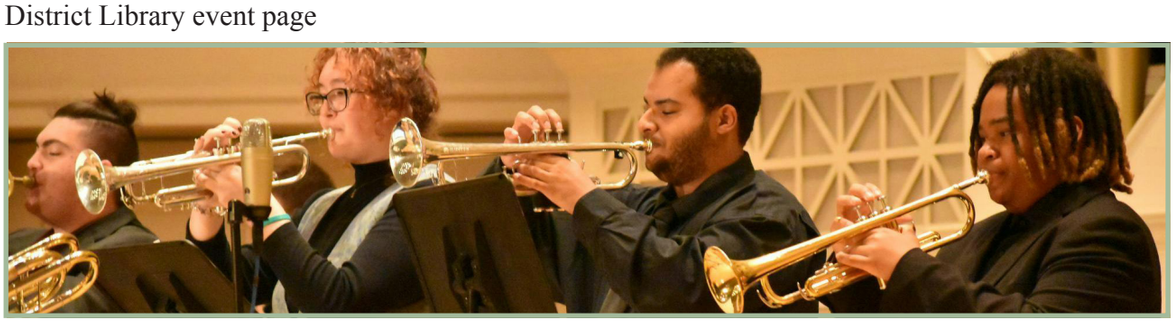
Holiday Nights at Greenfield Village
Lantern-lit streets and roasting chestnuts, carolers and fiddlers, and ice skating highlight the holiday for this yuletide event.
Admission: $30 to $44
6:30-10 p.m.
Dec. 12-14, 16-23 and 26-28
20900 Oakwood Blvd.
Dearborn

EMU Events

EMU Jazz Ensemble Concert
A presentation of old and new jazz classics.
7:30 - 9 p.m.
Tuesday, Dec. 9
Pease Auditorium

—

EMU Gymnastics
Golden Girls Classic Meet with NIU & SUNY Brockport
4 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 17, 2026
George Gervin GameAbove Center



The trumpet section in the EMU Jazz Ensemble Concert in Pease Auditorium on Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2024. *Max Taylor/The Eastern Echo*

Holiday Markets

Ypsilanti Artisans Holiday Market
A collection of artists and small businesses showcase and sell their artwork.
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Saturday-Sunday, Dec. 20-21
Ypsilanti Freighthouse
100 Market Place

Theatre/Film

"A Man for Christmas," by NTG
Ypsilanti's Neighborhood Theatre Group presents an original musical parody, "A Man for Christmas" by Kristin Anne Danko and A.M. Dean.
7:30 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, Dec. 11-13
2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 14
$20 general admission; $12 students
The Back Office Studio stage
13 N. Washington St.

The Back Office Studio is a coworking space in Ypsilanti home to many companies. *Gabriella Payeur/The Eastern Echo*

Comedy

Depot Town Open Mic
Standup comedians from Southwest Michigan highlight this evening of short sets hosted by Tommy Cook on Wednesday nights. Presented by Depot Town Comedy.
Admission: free
7:30-10:30 p.m.
734 Brewing Co.

The Ypsialnti Freighthouse hosts the Ypsilianti Artisans Holiday Market on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 20-21, 2025, for all those last-minute shoppers. *Josh Cromwell/The Eastern Echo*

Community

Shape Note Singing
Community-focused, practice-based singing style designed to make learning music accessible. The Ypsi Shape Note Group meets 2nd and 4th Tuesdays. Newcomers are invited on the 2nd Tuesday of each month.
7 p.m. Dec. 9
Off Center at Riverside Arts Center

Poetry

Finding Home Poetry Workshop
Poets Ashwini Bhasi and Ellen Stone guide this nature-oriented writing workshop.
6:30-8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 10
Tickets: $18
Booksweet
1729 Plymouth Road
Ann Arbor

Dance

Latin Dance Social
Bachat, salsa, cumbia, Brazilian zouk and more are taught and enjoyed during an evening of workshops and social dance time. Beginners are welcome.
7 p.m. to midnight
Saturday, Jan. 10, 2026
Rhizome Roots Studio
116 Pearl St

Riverside Swings Dance
Beginner lessons preceed a social dance at the Riverside Arts Center. First Fridays are free. Includes East Coast, Lindy Hop, Charleston, and country wing.
All experiences levels welcome; come with a partner, or alone.
Fridays
General Admission: $5
8 p.m. lessons; 9-11 p.m. dance
Friday, Jan. 2
Riverside Arts Center Dance Studio

Creative Workshops

Fellowship of the Fiber
Weekly gathering open to all that focuses on knitting, crocheting, embroidery, needlecraft, spinners, lacemakers and more.
6-8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 9, Dec. 16 and Dec. 23
Ypsilanti District Library
Whittaker Road Branch
5577 Whittaker Road

—

Figure Drawing
Every other Wednesday, local artist Erika Chesky guides a figure drawing workshop at Dzanc House. Open to all levels.
Fee: $10; registration available online
6:30-9 p.m.
Wednesday, Dec. 17
Dzanc House
402 N. Huron St.

Continued from page 1

Chey Ely, the creative behind Detroit Undercover magazine

Creator of Detroit Undercover, Chey Ely, and Creator of Detroit is Not Dead, Makayla Rybak, collaborators and creatives. *Photo Courtesy of Chey Ely*

Carol Detary
Arts and Entertainment Reporter

Eastern Michigan University fashion marketing innovation major Chey Ely's altruistic nature prepared them for the creation of their magazine, Detroit Undercover.

Ely said the fashion marketing innovation program introduced them to the Detroit fashion scene in 2024 and provided Ely a place to learn, adapt and try new creative skills.

"Before coming to [Fashion Marketing and Innovation] I didn't know how to express myself creatively," Ely said.

In 2024, Ely began interning for Detroit is Not Dead, a Detroit-founded fashion streetwear brand, under former classmate, friend and creator, Makayla Rybak.

Assisting others and helping others achieve their creative vision Ely left wanting more — something they could call their own.

"[Makayla] is my inspiration, she made me realize I could make something," Ely said.

Inspired by the creatives in Detroit is Not Dead, Ely dreamed up Detroit Undercover magazine. Ely said creating a magazine was a way to highlight artists in Detroit in a digestible form.

"I wanted something that channels all of my creative energy, even if it's a little out of my element," Ely said.

Ely knew the most important aspect about creating their magazine was working with a diversity of artists.

"I wanted everyone to be able to see themselves in the people I featured," Ely said.

The first issue of Detroit Undercover focused on fashion and clothing. The issue highlights artists in the Detroit fashion scene with interviews, photo shoots and artist insights.

Ely embraced the initial trial and error process as they figured out what truly worked best for their vision.

Ely said the process of finding artists was an opportunity to expand the connections made through their internship with Detroit is Not Dead.

Artists including Yreva and Carios Creative were featured in the first edition of Detroit Undercover. Ely also desires to uplift those that are close to them, like coworker and supporter Cait LeBlanc.

"The best part about the Detroit art community in music, fashion, art and all of the other things is that everyone is there to lift everyone else up," Ely said.

Pre-sale orders helped the magazine flourish, allowing for Ely to order larger shipments and eliminating shipping fees for the customer. Rybak assisted in distributing copies at markets and from word of mouth in the community

Detroit Undercover was created not for profit, and Ely sees it as an exploration of creativity.

"I make maybe one dollar off of every copy sold," Ely said. "I have never been a monetarily satisfied person."

For the second edition of Detroit Undercover Ely is asking for more help and staying open to collaboration. Musicians will be the highlight of the next copy, celebrating music across Detroit.

Ely is recruiting writers and plans to include a historical impact section on the birth of Motown in Detroit.

"I might not be currently growing anyone's business but I am telling their story and making people feel empowered and aware," Ely said. "[I want to] tell interesting stories that need to be heard."

In the future, Ely wants to cover small businesses and queer- and women-owned businesses.

The next edition will be out in early 2026 with a new look. The first edition was a traditional 8.5 by 11 inches and the second edition is set to be smaller, 9 by 7 inches. This shift in size aims to create a compact and convenient to handle.

To learn more details on the next pre-order sale for the second edition of Detroit Undercover follow @cheywasnothere on Instagram.

DETROIT UNDERCOVER
THE ULTIMATE CREATOR PLAYLIST TO INSPIRE YOUR NEXT PROJECT
WHAT IS DETROIT UNDERCOVER?
5 OF DETROIT'S FRESHEST FASHION INNOVATORS

Chey Ely created the Detroit Undercover Magazine in May. *Photo Courtesy of Chey Ely*

Vinyl popularity highlights value of physical media in digital landscape

Lilly Kujawski
The Eastern Echo Managing Editor

Everything that falls out of style is bound to come back — at least, that's how vinyl collectors explain the resurgence in interest in the music medium.

In 2022, vinyl records outsold CDs for the first time since 1987 and have continued to do so, selling 44 million units in 2024. Popular artists, like Taylor Swift, Billie Eilish and The Weeknd boast impressive vinyl sales, moving millions of physical copies of music even in the streaming age.

But what draws listeners to the format and how does the so-called vinyl revival impact independent artists and sellers?

Matt Bradish, owner of record store Underground Sounds, places a record on his shop turntable. *Lilly Kujawski/The Eastern Echo*

Why vinyl?

For Timothy Monger, an Ypsilanti resident and musician with three albums released on vinyl, records have evolved from simply a way to listen to music to a form of artist merchandise.

"There's, I think, a prestige element," Monger said. "If you go to a show, and you see someone who has a couple stickers and someone who has a piece of vinyl, you're kind of like, Ooh, like, they're legit; they made some money and they're serious enough to represent themselves with an expensive piece of merch, that, you know, also sounds good."

A record collector himself, putting his music on vinyl was an extension of the creative expression for Monger.

"I want to have a version that is the clearest, most deliberate form of the expression," Monger said.

"In an ideal world, I want the person to hear this for the first time on a nice turntable with good speakers and the sleeve on their lap and maybe following along to the lyrics or reading the instrumental credits or looking at the picture or whatever," Monger said. "But you know that it's probably going to be heard on an open laptop or on a bus on AirPods, or something."

For many listeners and collectors, it's the ritual of listening to an album in its physical format that has such a draw.

"I love... the whole ritual of opening a record and putting it down and putting the needle on it and listening to it and looking at the cover," said Shawn Gates, owner of Wyrd Byrd, a media store in Ypsilanti that sells new and used records, cassettes, CDs, DVDs, books, games and more.

Gates is a longtime collector who transformed his personal collection into Wyrd Byrd's inventory, a passion project for him.

Digital versions of music are often compressed, resulting in a quality loss, said Matt Bradish, owner of Underground Sounds, a record store in Ann Arbor.

Listening to music on vinyl also helps retain what Bradish described as room sound, which preserves the echo of the room the music was recorded in.

The sound quality of vinyl is fuller in a way that other formats are not, Andrews said.

"You can have your bluetooth speaker streaming off of, you know, whatever streaming service, and that music is going to sound great because it's a song you like, or music you love, but when it's on vinyl, it just fills the room in a completely different way, and I do think that is just because of the extremities of the sounds," Andrews said.

Independent music artists

The decision to release music on vinyl or not often comes down to the sticker price for smaller, independent artists, Monger said.

"It's prohibitively expensive for young musicians or any independent musician," Monger said. "Even with a day job, you have to figure out how to raise the funds or dip into savings or sell something or do a presale. It's not easy to just charge, you know, almost 3,000 bucks on your credit card and hope you make it back."

Third Man Records presses vinyl in Detroit, splitting manufacturing about 50/50 between its own label artists and others, Andrews said.

Third Man allows quantities as few as 200, in hopes of making vinyl pressing more accessible to smaller artists, Andrews said.

The cost, though, can vary depending on the specific needs of the artist or label and their specifications. Currently, Third Man offers a base-level special for smaller artists to press 200 copies of a 12 inch, 140 gram record for under $2,000, Andrews said.

When Monger created his most recent album, the price he paid per LP came to about $15; he ordered 200 copies and paid about $2,900. Conversely, he said he paid $340 for 100 CDs. He said he opted for a more deluxe LP, choosing a heavier option and pressing it on purple vinyl to complement the album art.

Monger's music is also available on streaming platforms, which he says helps make his music more accessible to listeners. However, streaming brings in minimal revenue at all for artists, especially smaller, independent ones like himself, he said.

In the United States, 1,500 official audio or video streams are considered the equivalent to one physical album sale, reported Chart Data. Artists typically make between $0.003 and $0.005 per stream on Spotify.

Independent record stores

Last year, Underground Sounds sold 7,000 units, Bradish said, most of which were vinyl records.

While some other small businesses saw economic downturn during the Covid-19 pandemic, Underground Sounds saw an increase in sales of 40-50%, Bradish said.

Third Man Records typically sells about a million album units per year, Andrews said.

At Wyrd Byrd, Gates has noticed more young people coming into the store with their families, excited to learn more about the music the way their parents grew up listening to it.

"I do get younger people sometimes come in with, say, their mom or dad, or both," Gates said. "And they're all looking at records together and getting excited about certain records."

"It's fun to hear parents kind of educating their kids on certain bands or types of music," he added.

Gates noted that the rise in popularity of vinyl records has brought some new listeners into his store.

"Occasionally, I'll get people that it's their first time buying a record, which is always really exciting to me to help them find their first record," he said.

SUBMISSIONS NOW OPEN

For Cellar Roots Volume 52

How to Submit :

- Go to linktr.ee/CellarRoots
- Click “Submit to Cellar Roots Volume 52!”
- Complete the Google form
- Submit your original art and/or writing

Deadline EXTENDED: 20 Jan., 2026